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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria
SUBJECT Status of Women

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

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1. Because of recent interest in the status of women in the captive countries of Eastern Europe, [REDACTED] certain differences between the Bulgarian printed material and the actual political situation in Bulgaria.
2. The status of women in present-day Bulgaria, as in all other Soviet dominated countries, is not a question of individual legal provisions but of a general political and legal climate. A mere enumeration or citation of legislative texts would be absolutely misleading because all terms, such as constitution, law, rights, and the like, differ radically in meaning and content from those in the free and civilized countries.
3. Communist society is not founded upon the postulate of inherent and inalienable individual rights such as that underlying Western democratic society. It is run by an arbitrary government, the dictatorship of the proletariat, under which the Party fiat is the ultimate and absolute law. Such rights and freedoms as might be granted by legislation are conditional and may be revoked or abridged at any time. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the individual possesses no protective shield of inherent and inalienable rights and freedoms. The government, which in turn is only an instrument and "transmission belt" of the Party, is absolute master over him and sets his checks and leeways in accordance with the exigencies of Party doctrine and policy.
4. The present Bulgarian constitution, enacted by the Communists in 1947, is not the supreme and fundamental law in the traditional sense of the term. According to the Prime Minister (and Secretary-General of the Party) Vukko Chervenkov

"No institution, organization or person could or should stand above the Central Committee, above the Politbureau. No decision of importance should be made without the Central Committee's consent and approval. This should become an iron

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law to all All important issues of the Party and the state should be decided collectively by the Politbureau and the Central Committee. Those guilty of deviation from this Bolshevik rule must be held responsible and punished." (Rabotnichesko Delo, 4 Feb 50).

5. The Party will and fiat is therefore the fundamental law, enforceable by the threat of punishment. The constitution, in Communist doctrine, is only a "superstructure" or expression of more basic factors at work. The individual rights proclaimed in the constitution and the laws are thus not above the fluctuations of political and economic developments but subject to these fluctuations.
6. On this political and legal background, the equalization of the sexes, of which Communism makes a great store, has not meant an elevation of women to an aggregate of inherent and unassailable rights but essentially an introduction of the woman as an equal instrument and/or object of government policy. The Communist legislated equality - which is new primarily in the realm of economic life - is an equality of subjection and sacrifice, the most significant result of which has been the expansion of the labor force and a corresponding increase of the rootless proletariat.

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